

***Special Exception: Statement of Justification***  
Fauquier County School Board: 3<sup>rd</sup> High School Site

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**A. Introduction.**

1. **General Site Information.** The Fauquier County Board of Supervisors and School Board mutually agreed on the acquisition of the 306.1± acre site known as the Mabel V. Lunceford Estate property. The entire property is zoned Rural Agriculture (RA) and is located on the east side of Route 602 (Rogues Road). It is: (a) north of Eddington Drive, which leads into the Brookside-Waterfield community; (b) across the street from the Grapewood Estates Subdivision; and (c) just south of the “back” entrance to Vint Hill (Finch Lane) and the Kettleridge subdivision on Kennedy Road (Refer to Figure 1). The Board of Supervisors acquired the entire property on December 22, 2005.

The County owned property is described as two discrete parcels under one parcel number (PIN 7914-79-2156). It has 100-year floodplain (Reference: FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map Number 510055, Panels 0305A and 310A). The Board of Supervisors has conveyed 209.7± acres (marked as Parcel A on Figures 1 and 2) on the northeast side of the floodplain to the School Board for the third high school site. The Board of Supervisors plans to hold the remaining 96.4± acre, which is designated as Parcel B, in open space for a future park and/or similar public purposes.

2. **Applications Required.** The subject Fauquier County School Board site is zoned Rural Agriculture (RA), which allows a “secondary school” by Special Exception. Here the Fauquier County School Board is seeking Board of Supervisors approvals for four discrete applications:
  - a. **Special Exception (Secondary School - Category 5):** to allow a “secondary school” in the RA district (Zoning Ordinance Section 3-305.3);
  - b. **Special Exception (Public Utilities – Category 20):** to allow an above ground sewage pumping station (Zoning Ordinance Section 3-320.3); and a
  - c. **15.2-2232, Code of Virginia, Comprehensive Plan Compliance Review.** Here the Planning Commission must find that the proposed high school (a public facility feature) is substantially in accord with the adopted Comprehensive Plan at this location.

**B. High School (Secondary School – Category 5 Special Exception).**

1. **High School (HS-3).** The Fauquier County School Board proposes a high school onsite with the planned characteristics outlined subsequently in B.2.a-i. Refer to Exhibit A

**FIGURE 1: Vicinity Map for the County Property (Formerly: Lunceford Estate)**



**VICINITY MAP**  
**SCALE: 1" = 2,000'**

(Special Exception Plat) which also presents the following site access and layout information:

- a. *Road Frontage and Site Access:* Route 602 serves as the public street frontage, with access from a single spine road leading into the site and serving the school and football/soccer field; and
  - b. *General Site Layout:* includes the high school, bus circulation, parking and athletic fields (refer to the Special Exception Plat for details).
2. **Justification Statement (Zoning Ordinance, Section 5-011 II.4).** The Zoning Ordinance requires the following responses for Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors consideration:
- a. Type of Operation: High School;
  - b. Hours of Operation: 7 a.m. until 5 p.m., with events and community uses regularly scheduled after hours;
  - c. Estimated Number of Pupils: Instruction capacity is designed to serve 1200 students; the core facilities will be designed to accommodate 1500 students to cover future student population growth;
  - d. Estimated Number of Employees: 180-200;
  - e. Qualifications of Applicant and Operators of the Proposed Use: The Applicant is the Fauquier County School Board, while the term operators applies to the educational professionals with all of the appropriate qualifications working at the school;
  - f. Estimated Traffic Impact of the Proposed Use: Refer to the Traffic Impact Analysis attached as Exhibit B.
  - g. Vicinity or General Area to be Served: Portions of Cedar Run, Center and Scott Districts;
  - h. Describe Building Façade and Architecture: The third high school (HS-3) will be a two story masonry structure of approximately 230,000 square feet. The visible roof areas will be sloping metal roofs. The palette of materials will be complimentary to the surrounding residential neighborhoods;
  - i. Proposed Use Will Conform to All Applicable County Regulations. The proposed HS-3 is an allowable special exception use in the Rural Agriculture zoning district classification. The Applicant intends to meet all Federal, State and County land development regulations for the development of the site.
3. **General Standards (Zoning Ordinance, Section 5-006).** All special exceptions must demonstrate satisfaction of the Zoning Ordinance's general standards applicable to the proposed use.

The proposed HS-3 meets the following applicable and paraphrased eight standards as stated:

- a. Section 5-006(1): *The proposed use will not adversely affect the use or development of neighboring properties, and it shall be in accordance with the applicable zoning district regulations and provisions of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.*

*Response:*

- 1) Use of the property for a High School will not adversely affect uses of surrounding Rural Agriculture (RA) or R-1 zoned properties. The school building and the planned athletic fields are more than 500 feet from the nearest RA zoned lots to the property's north and over 800 feet from Rogues Road.

All appropriate screening and landscaping required as part of the Tree Canopy, Landscape and Buffer Requirements of Section 7-600 of the Zoning Ordinance will be met. An existing perimeter fence along the property boundaries will remain in place. Any existing fence within the property will be removed. New six foot high chain link fence will be installed to enclose each of the competitive athletic fields – football, baseball and softball – with additional fence enclosing the entire athletic complex, with the exception of the general use PE / Soccer fields.

Any sports field lighting will be fully shielded and meet the public recreational requirements of the Zoning Ordinance Section 9-1006.1.a-f. This section is intended to provide adequate and safe illumination for athletic events, while minimizing sky-glow and light spillover to adjoining properties. Due to the distance of the football/soccer stadium and baseball/softball fields to the property line, there will be no spillover light impacts on adjoining properties.

To the immediate east of Parcel A is the Fairfax Wildlife Club's 87± acre site. The Fairfax Wildlife Club, Inc. property (PIN 7914-87-5524) adjoins the high school site along a 3,364 foot common boundary on the southeast of the high school site. Kettle Run flows generally west to east along this boundary.

The club has 69 members, 45 of whom are active. The club parcel is used for hunting and firearms target range shooting, and supports other activities including hunter safety classes, camping, Fauquier 4H Junior Gun Club, Fishing Derby, and club social activities. In discussions with the School Board, a representative of the Fairfax Wildlife Club has stated the club's willingness to work cooperatively with the school division on this project.

The terrain and vegetation of the high school site and the club site are generally conducive to preventing stray firearms fire from reaching the proposed school site. The westernmost portion of the club parcel is heavily wooded and contains a hill on which is situated the firing range. The firing range has a large earthen berm, which provides significant screening of much of the high school site from the west, and acts as a barrier to stray projectiles.

Much of the northern portion of the club parcel slopes downward toward Kettle Run, resulting in most firearm projectiles from this orientation being directed into the floodplain adjacent to Kettle Run. The slopes on the north side (the school site side) of Kettle Run are covered by trees, providing a natural screening for

stray projectiles. However, the school division plans to add additional protection such as solid screening or berms east of the planned athletic fields.

- 2) The adopted Chapter 6 - New Baltimore Service District Plan identifies the need for a new high school, and the location is consistent with plan policies; for example:

- Adequately buffered from roads, non-residential uses and operations hazards;
- Located in such a way that woodlands and natural areas serve as buffers between school operations and adjoining uses;
- Allow safe and convenient access to the local road network;
- Should not include major floodplain, drainage ways nor major utility easements;
- School locations should be collocated with County parks where practical; and
- Any proposed school site must have adequate access to existing or proposed public streets.

The NBSD Plan expects all schools to become an important amenity to New Baltimore and the surrounding neighborhoods by providing building space and field recreational areas for civic, cultural and community use.

- 3) *Public and Sewer Services.* The NBSD Plan has a policy which states: ensure public sewer is made available to new schools, and where possible, existing schools are connected to public sewer.

The proposed HS-3 is located adjacent to and just outside the New Baltimore Service District (NBSD) boundary. In this location, Rogues Road (Route 602) serves as the Service District's eastern edge. In addition, the NBSD Plan has a very limited area designated for WSA sewer service (AB-1). The Brookside subdivision represents the southern edge of AB-1, with sewer available for its Eddington Drive neighborhood just south of the HS-3 site. WSA sewer service is not available to locations outside such designated areas within New Baltimore.

To solve this utility service problem for the HS-3 site, Chapter 6 -- Service Districts of the Comprehensive Plan (reference p. 5) provides a provision which states that the Comprehensive Plan "does not intend to preclude the extension of public water and sewer to existing or planned governmental facilities that are near or adjacent to service districts." This section empowers the Board of Supervisors to allow extension of both sewer and water services to the HS-3 site. Note that sewer service lines will need to be sized to exclusively serve the Fauquier County School Board site. This connection will be made through the WSA facilities available through Brookside.

- b. *Section 5-006(2): The proposed use shall be such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic generated will not be hazardous or conflict with exiting and anticipated traffic in the neighborhood and on the streets serving the site.*

*Response:* Refer to the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) in Exhibit B for the details. The School Board shall construct the HS-3 entrance and frontage improvements on Rogues Road pursuant to VDOT requirements and specifications, including requisite signalization. In addition and through the VDOT Revenue Sharing Program, the School Board and Board of Supervisors (mix of County revenue and Proffer contributions and VDOT funds) are in the design stage for the required intersection improvements and signalization at the Route 605 intersections with Riley Road and Rogues Road resulting from the school and local residential development. These improvements are targeted for completion in July of 2007.

- c. *Section 5-006(3): The Board of Supervisors may impose additional standards during consideration of this application.*

*Response:* The proposed school will comply with all County requirements and special exception conditions established through the public hearing and approval process.

- d. *Section 5-006(4): Open space shall be provided in an amount at least equal to that specified for the zoning district in which the proposed use is located.*

*Response:*

- 1) *Section 3-408.3 of the Zoning Ordinance:* requires a special exception application in the RA district to provide 13% of its acreage in open space. Parcel A totals 209.7± acres, and would require 27.3 acres in open space. For just the proposed HS-3, excluding the building, parking areas and even the athletic fields and facilities, over 80% of Parcel A is in open space. Note that the School Board reserves the right to use a portion of that open space acreage later, since there may be another school planned onsite in the future. That future option is not the subject of this application. However, note that an additional school would require either a separate special exception or an amendment to the HS-3 approved special exception; both would be subject to public notifications and hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. Regardless, the minimum open space requirement would be 27.3 acres for the overall Parcel A (13% of the site) and the floodplain/wetland acreage can be included.
- 2) *Section 5-504.1(B) of the Zoning Ordinance:* requires the school to provide for each student 430 square feet of usable outdoor recreation space that may be in use at any one time. The school development program provides 14.8 acres of active recreation space.
- 3) *Section 5-504.2 of the Zoning Ordinance:* requires that all recreation areas shall be fully fenced. All competition athletic fields, including discus and shot put, and tennis courts will be fenced; while the P.E./Soccer Fields are not. Note that a portion of the northern perimeter of the site is also fenced. No recreation area or field is within 500 feet of the northern property line, while all athletic fields and facilities are over 1000 feet from the western property line, with the exception of

the tennis courts ( $\pm$  800 feet from Route 602). The 100-year floodplain is to the immediate south of these facilities.

- e. *Section 5-006(5): Adequate utility, drainage, parking, loading and other necessary facilities to serve the proposed use shall be provided. Parking and loading requirements shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article 7.*

*Response:* The proposed high school will be designed to conform to the Zoning Ordinance, Fauquier County Code and Design Standards Manual requirements regarding loading, parking, stormwater management and basic utilities. School facility development will also conform to the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (WSA) requirements for site service.

- f. *Section 5-006(6): Signs shall be regulated by the provisions of Article 8, except as may be qualified in the parts that follow for a particular use.*

*Response:* Any proposed signs for the school site shall comply with the County sign regulations.

- g. *Section 5-006(7): A time limit may be imposed for the special exception if the Board of Supervisors deems it appropriate.*

*Response:* The High School facility, if approved at this location, will become a permanent public fixture and financial investment by the Board of Supervisors, School Board and taxpayers for this overall community. A special exception renewal timeline for this type of facility is not relevant. If the facility or onsite uses are expanded in the future beyond the conditions of approval, then the special exception for HS-3 would be required to be amended through the public hearing and approval process.

- h. *Section 5-006(8): The proposed use shall not degrade air quality, surface and groundwater quality and quantity in such a way that would hinder or discourage the appropriate development and/or use of adjacent land and/or buildings or impair the value thereof.*

*Response:*

- 1) *Surface Water.* The school site plan will meet all stormwater management requirements contained in the Design Standards Manual and the Northern Virginia BMP Handbook to insure surface water quality is protected.
- 2) *Heron Rookery.* During a 2004 public hearing for the approved WSA elevated water storage facility special exception on the former Mabel V. Luncford, Estate property, residents indicated that a heron rookery existed onsite. Therefore, the Department of Community Development invited the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) to identify any such habitat in October of 2005. Within the 33 acres of FEMA 100-year floodplain on the entire property (Parcel A: School Site; Parcel B: Board of Supervisors Property), Great Blue Heron nests were found. U.S. Army Corps of Engineer staff has also viewed the site at a different time.

The Great Blue Heron is not considered an endangered species, nor subject to the 1,320-foot protection radius for such species as recommended by VDGIF. No special management provisions are required; however, the area within the vicinity of the nesting area will be planned as open space or P.E./Soccer fields, both compatible uses adjoining such a habitat that is located inside the 100-year floodplain. Additional emphasis also is provided that no land disturbing activities will occur within the 100-year floodplain of Kettle Run (with the only possible exception of a limited underground sewer line connection to Rogues Road) or result in any wetland disturbance. The WSA has production wells that are also delineated on the Special Exception Plat, but are not subject to this application.

It is also noteworthy that the Board of Supervisors has not finalized how it plans to use the 96± acres of Parcel B on the south side of the 100-year floodplain. However, very preliminary discussions have indicated that one option could be an environmental or a more passive park.

- i. Section 5-006(9): *All uses shall comply with the lot, size, bulk regulations and performance standards of the zoning district in which located.*

*Response:* The proposed high school will comply with all applicable lot requirements and performance standards.

#### **4. Additional Use - Specific Standards**

##### **a. Category 5 Educational Uses (Section 5-400 of the Zoning Ordinance)**

- 1) Section 5-501: *All off-street parking and loading areas, swimming pools and tennis courts and similar facilities shall be effectively screened and shall not be located in any required yard.*

*Response:* None of these uses shall be located within the required yards and all landscape and buffering requirements of the Zoning Ordinance will be met.

- 2) Section 5-502(1): *No structure used for or in conjunction with the use shall be located within 100 feet of any adjoining property which is in a Residential or Rural District.*

*Response:* As reflected in the Special Exception Plat, no building or structure will be within 500 feet of the property line for Parcel A.

- 3) Section 5-502(2): *The site shall have a minimum road frontage, as required for the site's zoning district, on a road designated as a major collector in the Comprehensive Plan, unless the Board of Supervisors finds that the type and amount of traffic generated by the facility will not cause an undue impact on the neighbors or adversely affect safety of road usage.*

*Response:*

- a) Rogues Road (Rt. 602) is designated as a Rural Minor Collector within the Comprehensive Plan (reference Map 10.1: County Rural Road Classifications). In the update of the New Baltimore Service District Plan,



this roadway is planned to have an 80-foot right-of-way, with Route 605/602 intersectional and signalization and other associated corridor improvements designated as the number 1 priority for secondary roads.

- b) Since Rogues Road is designated as a Rural Minor Collector, the Traffic Impact Analysis demonstrates, and with the improvements briefly identified herein as 3.b, the Board of Supervisors has sufficient information to make the finding that the HS-3 facility will not cause an undue impact on the neighbors or adversely affect safety of road usage of Route 602.
- 4) Section 5-504.1.B: *430 square feet of usable outdoor recreation shall be provided for each child in grades four (4) through twelve (12) that may use that space at any one time.*

*Response:* Refer herein to 3.d (2).

- 5) Section 5-504.2: *All outdoor recreation areas shall be fully fenced.*

*Response:* Refer herein to 3.d (3).

- C. ***Special Exception (Public Utilities – Category 20).*** In order to connect the School Board site to WSA sewer services, a small above ground sewage pumping station will be required. The Special Exception Plat identifies the location along the edge of the 100-year floodplain, and provides an elevation drawing of the planned structure. The School Board intends to design of the pumping station and the connecting sewer lines to be sized to exclusively serve this site.

The facility will be a duplex submersible non-clog wastewater pump station of approximately 125 gallons per minute capacity, designed to the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (FCWSA) standards. The pump station will be located within an approximate 100 feet by 100 feet, fenced and gated lot with an all weather access road. Emergency power and all electrical service will be provided by the school.

Pump station appurtenances will include (subject to FCWSA approval) a six inch diameter non-sparking duplex wet well (below grade) with valve box. Architectural treatment is assumed to be a pre-cast concrete building with a flat roof and separate electrical control hut.

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